

Danish Lighthouses is drawn up on the same plan as former Reports (*cf.* Ibis, 1900, p. 216), and is accompanied by the usual excellent map. In 1899, 868 specimens of birds were sent from the stations to the Zoological Museum of Copenhagen, and referred to 56 species. It is curious that such birds as *Alauda arvensis*, *Turdus merula*, and *Erithacus rubecula*, which we should be inclined to class as sedentary in England, are found wandering about in the Danish archipelago.

XI.—Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.

WE have received the following letters, addressed to 'The Editors' by Mr. D. Le Souëf, Mr. R. Shelford, and Mr. W. L. Slater:—

SIRS,—I notice that Mr. H. C. Robinson, in his "Contributions to the Zoology of North Queensland," in the Bull. Liverp. Mus. ii. p. 115 (1900), treats the *Dacelo gigas* found there as being doubtfully subspecific under the name of "*D. g. minor*." These birds extend from the South-eastern portion of Australia right through to the North-eastern, without any break, and as we go further towards the north they gradually decrease in size, but very slightly. Those found in the extreme north are, therefore, less in their measurements than those from further south, but cannot well be referred to a subspecies on that account, as intermediate sizes are found. The same remark applies to several other birds, such as *Manorhina garrula* and *Trichoglossus nova-hollandiæ*, which also extend over the continent on the eastern side. In Northern Australia some of the birds, which are either weak in flight or local in their ranges, such as *Calyptorhynchus funereus* and *Psophodes crepitans*, have notes slightly different from those of the same kind found in the more southern districts; and as we go from one extreme of the Continent to the other, the note often seems to change gradually. Mr. Robinson mentions the range of *Prionodura newtoniana* as now extending to Mount Peter

Botte. But I recorded this bird as being found in that locality in a paper published in the 'Victorian Naturalist' for March and April 1897.

Yours &c.,

D. LE SOUËF.

Melbourne, August 16th, 1900.

SIRS,—I have to record the capture of the rare Snipe-billed Godwit, *Macrorhamphus Taczanowskii*, in August last, near the mouth of the Trusan River, Sarawak. The solitary specimen secured was an adult female, still showing traces of the summer plumage in the rufous coloration of the breast, a few of the feathers of the neck and back being also tipped with the same colour. The late Mr. A. H. Everett records the species in his List of the Birds of Borneo (Journ. Straits Br. Asiat. Soc. 1889, p. 209), giving Pontianak as the locality and Diard as his authority. The Sarawak Museum also possesses a specimen of an adult male in the typical winter dress, shot at Buntal, Sarawak River, in November 1892; but these seem to be the only notices of the occurrence of the species so far to the south-east.

Another visitant to our shores may be noted, to wit the Tufted Duck (*Fuligula cristata*), a male example of which was shot in December last in Kuching. This record very considerably extends the southern range of the species. It is perhaps noteworthy that the Anatidæ, though common enough during the N.E. monsoon at the northern end of Borneo, are extremely rare in the south-western end, which seems to be rather out of their line of migration.

Yours &c.,

R. SHELFORD,

Curator, Sarawak Mus.

Sarawak Museum, Sarawak,
Sept. 21st, 1900.

SIRS,—In revising the account of the Shrikes prepared by the late Dr. Stark for the second volume of the 'Birds of South Africa,' I found, to my surprise, that the Grey-headed

Bush-Shrike (*Laniarius poliocephalus*, Sharpe's edition of Layard) will require a new specific name. The names by which the bird has hitherto been known are :—(1) *blanchoti* (*Malaconotus blanchoti* Stephens, General Zool. xiii. p. 161, 1825); (2) *icterus* (*Laniarius icterus* Gray, Genera of Birds, i. p. 299, 1847); and (3) *poliocephalus* (*Lanius poliocephalus* Licht. Verz. Doubl. p. 45, 1823).

Of these three, the first two are founded on Le Vaillant's 'Pie-grièche Blanchot' (Ois. d'Afr. vi. p. 122, pl. 285, 1808), which is stated to have been obtained in West Africa; while Lichtenstein's *L. poliocephalus* was also founded on a West-African bird. *Laniarius hypopyrrhus* Hartl. (Verz. Brem. Samml. p. 61) again is West-African; while *Archolestes approximans* Cab. (von der Decken's Reise, iii. p. 27) is East-African.

I have not been able myself to compare the Grey-headed Bush-Shrikes of South Africa with those from North-east and West Africa; but Capt. Shelley has kindly done so for me, and tells me that he can easily distinguish three species as follows :—

- A. Larger, wing 4·8 inches; no trace of chestnut on the crop. (Senegal to the Quanza R.)
- B. Smaller; crop washed with chestnut.
 - a. Crop chestnut-yellow; wing 4·5 inches. (South-east Africa northwards to the Pangani River.)
 - b. Crop rich chestnut. (East Africa north of the Pangani River.)

Of these the first will stand as *Laniarius poliocephalus* (Licht.), the last as *Laniarius approximans* (Cab.); and for the middle one, from South-east Africa, I propose the name of *Laniarius starki*, in memory of my friend and collaborator Dr. A. C. Stark, the author of the first volume of the 'Birds of South Africa,' whose untimely death at Ladysmith is deplored by all of us.

Yours &c.,

W. L. SCLATER.

South African Museum, Cape Town,
Oct. 1st, 1900.

The Birds of Antarctica.—Mr. Borchgrevink's paper in the 'Geographical Journal' for October last, upon the Expedition of the 'Southern Cross,' contains several interesting passages on the birds of 'Antarctica.' The first Emperor Penguins (*Aptenodytes forsteri*) were met with on January 18th, 1899, in about lat. 65° S. and long. 164° E.

"The Common Penguin of Victoria Land is *Eudyptes adelie*. As in 1894, the rookery of these birds at Cape Adare covered the whole peninsula of Camp Ridley; their nests, placed above the guano deposits, being formed of small pebbles, probably blown from the top of the cape by the gales. In 1894 the colony was inhabited almost entirely by white-throated Penguins, whereas those met with on our outward voyage in 1899 had nearly all black throats. I was able to prove that both are of the same species; the young birds, which are left behind when the adults go to sea, having more or less white throats*. It was curious to see the Penguins as they invaded the peninsula in the spring, one continuous stream passing over the ice from October 14 onwards. They at once started nest-making, taking possession of their old places, and bringing fresh pebbles to the nests. During the time of love-making they had many hard fights. As a general rule two eggs are laid, while three are very seldom found; the period of incubation, during which both parents take their turn on the nest, lasted in 1899 from the beginning of November to early in December. During heavy gales the birds, which ordinarily sit upright or lie facing various directions, all turned with their beaks to the south-east, the direction from which we had the heaviest gales. The Skua is the worst enemy of the Penguin, constantly soaring over the nests and watching an opportunity to steal an egg or young bird.

"We saw comparatively few of the Emperor Penguin (*Aptenodytes forsteri*), nor were we able to find their nesting-place. In the autumn of 1900, we for the first time saw several together, and even then only in small numbers. They

* [The white-throated form is the *Dasyrhamphus herculis* Finsch, but has been correctly re-united to *Pygoscelis adelie* in the B. M. Catalogue (xxvi. p. 633).—EDD.]

came swimming like the small Penguins, with which, however, they did not mix.

“The Skuas (*Lestris*) arrived and laid their eggs somewhat later than Penguins. They made their nests in the heights, up to 1000 feet on Cape Adare.

“Of Petrels, *Oceanites oceanicus* also hatched on Victoria Land, the nests being found in cracks of the rocks and under boulders. The elegant White Petrel (*Pagodroma nivea*), with black eyes, beak, and feet, likewise builds in cavities of the rocks. These birds are attractive both in appearance and habits. The pairs show deep attachment, and the courage of the male is indomitable when its mate is in danger. The Brown-backed and Giant Petrels were seen, but their nests were not discovered. I believe the former breed on Geikie Land. The Giant Petrels seemed to arrive before the approach of gales, and I attributed their visits to strong winds at sea, which drove them towards the shore for shelter. In their flight they much resemble the Albatross.”

We may add that the whole collection of birds made during the expedition of the ‘Southern Cross’ is now at the British Museum for determination.

Ridgway's Birds of North and Middle America.—We regret to hear that the progress of Mr. Ridgway's great work on the Birds of North and Middle America was much retarded by the author's ill-health last year, but are pleased to learn that he has lately been able to resume his labours, and that the first volume (containing his account of the Fringillidæ, Tanagridæ, and Icteridæ) will be issued shortly. The area embraced in the work is the whole of the American continent down to the Isthmus of Panama, and includes also the West Indies and the Galapagos. The entire Avifauna will therefore contain about 3000 species, which are referred to 750 genera and 300 families. The illustrations of generic characters begun in Baird's ‘Review,’ and continued in the ‘History of North American Birds,’ will be extended in the present work so as to embrace all the genera which occur within its limits.

Attempted Re-introduction of the Great Bustard into England.—We are pleased to learn that serious attempts are being made to reinstate the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) in some of the districts of East Anglia where it was formerly abundant, and we see no reason why they should not be successful. A circular has been sent out by the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society to the principal landowners in Norfolk, inviting their co-operation in giving special protection to this bird, which, it should be recollected, has always remained one of the species included in the list of legal game. It is announced that 16 Great Bustards have been liberated "on a run of 400 acres, which will be shortly increased to 800," but we trust that the "protected area" will be much more extensive. It has also been arranged that additions shall be made to the stock every year, which of course will materially add to the chance of the re-establishment of the bird. This is, indeed, a step in the right direction, very different from some of the modern operations of the friends of "Acclimatization"!

Mr. Wigglesworth's Expedition to the Pacific.—Mr. L. W. Wigglesworth left London on November 20th, by the SS. 'Duke of Devonshire,' for Brisbane direct, whence he will proceed on a collecting expedition to the Fiji Islands, in continuation of his studies of the Polynesian Ornis. Geographical variation is a strongly pronounced feature among the birds of these islands, and, although the ornithology has been made known to us in a highly interesting manner by the writings of Drs. Finsch and Hartlaub and of the late Mr. E. L. Layard, Mr. Wigglesworth hopes there may still be something to be found in the way of local races among the high mountains of the larger islands. Levuka will be his headquarters during the period of his visit.

Bakeniceps in East Africa.—As already announced in some of the newspapers, Sir Harry Johnston has sent to the British Museum, in a collection recently received, a specimen of the Shoe-bill, or Whale-headed Stork as it is sometimes called

(*Baleniceps rex*). It was obtained by Mr. W. S. Doggett, Sir Harry's collector, at Entebbe (or Ntebe), on the north shore of Lake Victoria, on April the 22nd last. It is marked "Female: eye Naples-yellow." The specimen is now on exhibition in the entrance-hall of the British Museum, among the recent acquisitions.

The only previously known locality for this remarkable bird was the White Nile, where it was discovered by Mansfield Parkyns in 1849 (see P. Z. S. 1850, p. 1, Aves, pl. xxxv.). For a recent notice of its occurrence there see 'Ibis,' 1900, p. 692.

Ornithology at the Exposition Universelle.—We cannot say that the Exposition Universelle of 1900 contained much of special interest to the ornithologist. But there were many small series of birds exhibited in the sections. Amongst these may be specially noticed those in several of the sections of the division 'Colonies Françaises,' which was one of the most complete and best arranged departments of the 'Exposition.' The series of birds from New Caledonia seemed to be fairly complete, though the specimens were not scientifically labelled. The collection of Natural History objects from the Transvaal was also well arranged and labelled. It was selected, we believe, from the Pretoria Museum by Dr. Gunning, F.Z.S., who, we are pleased to learn, has been confirmed by the new British authorities in his post as Director of that Institution.

The Usage of the Generic Term Gavia.—American ornithologists have recently proposed to supersede the generic name '*Urinator*,' which has been hitherto used in the 'Checklist' for the Divers (*Colymbus*), by '*Gavia*' of Forster (Enchir. Hist. Nat. p. 38, 1788). Dr. Reichenow shows in a note on the subject (Orn. Mon. viii. p. 135) that this is not correct, because *Gavia* was employed in 1770 by Gmelin (Reise Russl. p. 152) as the generic name of *Larus ichthyaëtus*, and must therefore be considered as a mere synonym of *Larus*. It would seem by this, and by other similar cases,

that even the most active disciples of the doctrine of Priority are not likely to succeed in their efforts to bring about perfect uniformity in Zoological Nomenclature: "*Quot homines, tot sententiæ*" must, we fear, remain the rule.

Supposed New British Birds.—In the 'Times' of December the 3rd there is the following note from Mr. Joseph P. Nunn, of Royston, Herts:—

"At Westgate-on-Sea, early in October last, I saw two specimens of the *Calliope camtschatkensis*, or Ruby-throated Warbler, in their wild state. I had a very fine opportunity of seeing their beautiful plumage, and through the kind assistance of Professor Newton I have since been able to examine some skins. I have not the slightest doubt as to their identity, and I believe it to be the first recorded instance of this Warbler having visited the British Isles."

Another straggler which has recently occurred in England is Baird's Sandpiper (*Tringa bairdi*) of North America. See Bull. B. O. C. xi. p. 27.

Prof. Newton's Royal Medal.—At the Anniversary Meeting of the Royal Society on November 30th last one of the Royal Medals was awarded to Prof. Alfred Newton, F.R.S. On delivering the medal the President, Lord Lister, spoke as follows:—

"Prof. Newton has devoted himself for the last fifty years to the study of Ornithology; and the 'Dictionary of Birds' may well be called the *résumé* of his labours. Prof. Newton's work is eminently critical—a model of careful and cautious criticism of everything pertaining to his favourite branch of science. The 'Dictionary of Birds' is the acknowledged standard work on Ornithology, the progress of which science in this country is due mainly to his critical, suggestive, and stimulating influence. His personal labours refer chiefly to historical, systematic, and faunistic questions. It is by his untiring efforts that the vexed question of nomenclature and synonymy has been practically settled and has been put on its present footing. He is also one of the leading authorities

in the modern branch of zoo-geography, which owes some of the most important modifications and generalizations to him. Lastly, it is only fair to mention that he is one of the few zoologists among his contemporaries who, from the first, embraced the doctrine of evolution according to Darwinian principles.”

The Birds of Yorkshire.—We are pleased to learn that arrangements have been made for the speedy resumption of the publication of Mr. W. Eagle Clarke's 'Birds of Yorkshire,' which work has partly appeared in the 'Transactions' of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union, and "the continuation of which was interrupted by Mr. Clarke's leaving Yorkshire to settle in Edinburgh. Mr. Clarke and the Y.N.U. have now been able to secure the services of so able and competent an ornithologist as Mr. Thos. H. Nelson, M.B.O.U., of Redcar, to continue and complete the task.”

XII.—Obituary.

DR. JOHN ANDERSON.—The death of our much esteemed friend, Dr. John Anderson, although he did little special work in Ornithology, must not pass unnoticed in the columns of 'The Ibis.' He was born in Edinburgh in 1833, and took the degree of Doctor of Medicine at the University of that city in 1861, receiving a gold medal for his thesis entitled "Observations in Zoology." His first post was that of Professor of Natural Science at the Free Church College in his native capital; but in 1864 he resigned that office and proceeded to India, having been offered the headship of a new Museum planned by the Supreme Government in order to receive the collections of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. In 1865 Dr. Anderson was appointed Superintendent of the new Museum at Calcutta; and two or three years later was also selected for the Chair of Comparative Anatomy in the Medical College of that city. Calcutta, therefore, became his headquarters for the whole of his professional career, but he took